

**Remarks**

For the reasons set forth below, reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application are respectfully requested.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication that claims 25 and 35 contain allowable subject matter. Claim 20 has been rewritten to incorporate the subject matter of now-canceled claim 25. Thus, claim 20 and its dependent claims are now believed to be allowable. Claim 30 has been rewritten to include the subject matter of now-canceled claim 35 and intervening claim 34 (except for the feature of claim 34 that the registers each include a respective flip-flop). Claims 30 and its dependent claims are now believed to be allowable. Independent claims 1, 9 and 18 have been amended to incorporate subject matter along the lines of allowable claim 25 (*e.g.*, output circuits each comprising at least two series-connected gate circuits being respectively associated with each of the signal lines and each latch circuit being connected to one of the gate circuits of a corresponding output circuit). Based on these amendments, claims 1, 9 and 18 are believed to be allowable.

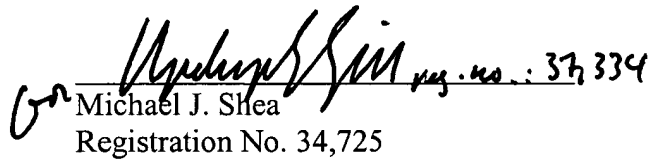
Applicant does not acquiesce in the rejections based on Yasunishi *et al.*, nor does Applicant admit that Yasunishi *et al.* is prior art to the claims of the subject application. Applicant believes the rejections based on Yasunishi *et al.* are moot in view of the above-described amendments to the claims.

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The pending claims are believed to be allowable and notification to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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